Patent claims:

1. Transparent or translucent microemulsions of the oil-in-water type

- comprising an oil phase, composed essentially of constituents of low volatility, and an aqueous phase
- containing:
  one or more polyethoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or
  one or more polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or
  one or more polyethoxylated and polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers,
- and also containing one or more W/O emulsifiers, if desired,
- having an emulsifier content of less than 20% by weight, based on the total weight of the emulsion,
- and obtainable by a process in which a mixture of the base components, comprising the aqueous phase, the oil phase, one or more of the O/W emulsifiers according to the invention, one or more W/O emulsifiers, if desired, and other auxiliary substances, additives and/or active substances, if desired, is brought to a temperature within or above the phase inversion temperature range and then cooled to room temperature.

2. Process for the preparation of transparent or translucent O/W microemulsions which comprise:

(1) an aqueous phase comprising, if desired, conventional substances soluble or dispersible in water,

(2) an oil phase which is composed essentially of constituents of low volatility and which comprises, if desired, conventional substances soluble or dispersible in the oil phase,

(3) one or more polyethoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers and/or one or more polyethoxylated and polypropoxylated O/W emulsifiers, and

(4) if desired, one or more W/O emulsifiers,

which process comprises ~~characterized in that~~

(a) the initial concentrations of the oil phase, the

aqueous phase and, if desired, one or more W/O emulsifiers are chosen and these constituents are added to one another,

(b) the initial concentration of the O/W emulsifier or emulsifiers, which may also be equal to zero, is chosen and this O/W emulsifier or these O/W emulsifiers are added to the mixture obtained in (a),

(c) the mixture obtained in (b) having a starting temperature, and

(d) the mixture obtained in (b) by appropriate variation of at least one parameter selected from the group comprising the temperature and the concentration or concentrations of at least one of the chosen emulsifiers and/or of the oil phase and/or of the aqueous phase, and the mixture formed passes through the phase inversion region between W/O emulsions and O/W emulsions and is brought into the region where the mixture exists as an O/W emulsion or O/W microemulsion. ~~and~~

~~(e) the mixture obtained in (d) is then optionally subjected to further processing steps.~~

3. Process for the preparation of transparent or translucent O/W microemulsions according to Claim 1, which process comprises ~~characterized in that~~ a mixture of the base components, comprising the aqueous phase, the oil phase, one or more of the O/W emulsifiers used according to the invention, one or more W/O emulsifiers, if desired, and other auxiliary substances, additives and/or active substances which form an O/W emulsion below the phase inversion temperature range, if desired, is brought to a temperature

- at which the components soluble in the oil phase are either dissolved or at least in the molten state,
- which corresponds at least to the melting point of the highest-melting oil component not present in the dissolved state,
- and which is below the phase inversion temperature range of the system,

and the resulting O/W emulsion is then cooled to room temperature to form an O/W microemulsion.